UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.7/1990/14
2 January 1990

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS
Eleventh special session
Vienna, 29 January-2 February 1990
Item 9 of the provisional agenda*

OTHER URGENT MATTERS

Drug abuse: extent, patterns and trends

Report of the Secretary-General

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*E/CN.7/1990/1.

V.90-80070 6208T

INTRODUCTION

1. This document is based on data contained in Government reports on the working of the international drug control treaties submitted to the Secretary-General for 1987 and 1988. Chapter I summarizes reported drug abuse in the world; chapter II reviews the extent, patterns and trends with respect to drug abuse by region. The designations employed and the presentation of material in this report do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or any authority, or concerning the delimitation of any frontiers or boundaries. Member States which have submitted data on behalf of a territory or area are indicated as follows: (F) France, (NL) Netherlands and (UK) United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I. SUMMARY OF DRUG ABUSE IN THE WORLD

2. Although the extent, patterns and trends with respect to drug abuse and its associated problems varied from country to country and within a given country from one population group to another, the reported data clearly showed that the drug abuse situation had continued to deteriorate in most parts of the world. The most striking feature of the problem was the continued escalation of cocaine and heroin abuse, although the abuse of cannabis, amphetamine-type substances, benzodiazepines and sedative-hypnotics had also reached high levels in many countries. Most countries reported that drug abuse had spread to all social strata and age groups, but was predominant among youth. While the majority of persons abusing drugs were males, the proportion of women abusing drugs continued to grow. Children and adolescents were often involved with drugs at a much earlier age than in the past. Their initial involvement frequently led to experimentation with potent drugs and with dangerous patterns of abuse.

3. A certain number of countries with long-standing drug abuse problems reported that the number of experimental and occasional drug users had decreased while the number of compulsive drug users had increased.

4. Multiple drug abuse of various combinations of drugs, often taken together with alcohol, was a widespread pattern in most countries and in turn aggravated the overall problem and increasingly led to severe psychological and health disorders. Personal and social dysfunction, impairment of health, crime and other problems were often associated with drug abuse. The problems relating to drug-addicted pregnant women and drug-addicted babies were increasing in a number of countries as was the incidence of drug-related deaths.

5. Drug abuse by injection contributed significantly to the increasing spread of infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and some other viruses causing serious diseases. Intravenous drug users were recognized in a number of countries as a major vector for the spread of HIV infection to the population at large. In some countries more than half of the adult cases of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) were related to intravenous drug abuse. Among persons abusing drugs by injection, HIV infection was predominantly spread by sharing contaminated needles and syringes, a pattern observed in a very high proportion of this population. Once HIV virus had been introduced to intravenous drug users, it spread very rapidly in this population. Infected drug users transmitted the virus to their sexual partners, who might not be involved in drug abuse. The virus was further spread from infected persons to

others in a community, mainly through sexual intercourse but also through blood contacts or from mothers to their babies.

6. It was reported that the extent of heroin abuse had increased in a number of countries in all regions. Heroin abuse continued to pose serious problems in North America and Western Europe, in a number of countries of Asia and the Far East and Oceania, and in certain countries of the Near and Middle East. In Africa the problem was limited. Abuse of opiates, particularly codeine and home-made preparations from opium poppies, such as the decoction of poppy straw, was reported as a problem by a number of countries, particularly in Eastern Europe. By and large, the abuse of other opiates remained on a much smaller scale than heroin abuse. Opium consumption had generally remained stable, or had continued to decline, in those countries of Asia and the Far East and the Near and Middle East in which it had traditionally been abused.

7. Cocaine abuse continued to escalate dramatically in most regions of the world, mainly in the Americas and Europe. The smoking of coca paste was a serious problem in a number of South American countries while the smoking of cocaine base ("crack") continued to pose a growing problem in North America. The injecting of cocaine hydrochloride was reported to be a significant problem in a number of countries. Cocaine abuse produced a high euphoric effect of a short duration that encouraged repeated and compulsive use of the drug, often resulting in serious behavioural and health disorders, medical emergencies and violence.

8. Cannabis remained the most widely abused illicit drug in most parts of the world. More potent forms of the cannabis plant and its preparations were often abused.

9. Increasing abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants was reported from a number of countries in most regions. Benzodiazepines, minor tranquillizers, barbiturates and non-barbiturate sedative-hypnotics were abused world-wide, often in combination with alcohol or other substances. The abuse of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) remained a problem in some countries. Phencyclidine (PCP) continued to be increasingly abused in North America. The abuse of volatile solvents by children and young adolescents was a problem in many countries.

II. REVIEW OF DRUG ABUSE: EXTENT, PATTERNS AND TRENDS BY REGION

Africa

10. Government reports continued to indicate deterioration in the drug abuse situation in the region. Cannabis abuse, often in combination with other substances, remained the most common pattern, but such abuse had in recent years escalated to the abuse of psychotropic substances, heroin and cocaine.

Narcotic drugs

11. Several countries reported the abuse of opiates. In Mauritius, heroin was abused by injection in 1988. The drug was often taken in combination with codeine, benzodiazepines, alcohol or cannabis. Most of the heroin users were young urban unemployed persons. Such abuse showed some decrease in 1988. Opium abuse, which was being increasingly replaced by heroin abuse, did not present a problem any more. The abuse of other opiates, mainly codeine, remained stable in 1988. Codeine was often abused in combination with heroin (brown sugar) or benzodiazepines. For 1988, Benin reported that a small

number of persons had abused opium and heroin. Those drugs were often abused in combination with amphetamines. Such abuse increased mainly among males in the 20-30 age group. One death related to such abuse was registered.

12. For 1988, Côte d'Ivoire reported that heroin had been abused by injection, smoking or inhalation. Such abuse, which was first observed in 1986, showed some decrease in 1988. It occurred mainly in the population of the 20-30 age group. South Africa reported some abuse (on a small scale) of synthetic narcotics. For 1987, Nigeria reported the problem of the abuse of heroin, opium and other opiates, but the number of persons involved in such abuse was relatively small. Burkina Faso reported some abuse of synthetic narcotics in 1987. For 1987, Ghana reported the problem of heroin abuse, which was first observed in 1986.

13. Countries reporting some cocaine abuse included: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa. It was smoked, injected or sniffed, mainly by individuals in the 20-40 age group.

14. Almost all countries that provided information reported cannabis abuse. These included: Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In 1988, cannabis was abused in populations of both urban and rural areas, but it was most prevalent in cities. Such abuse affected all social strata and age groups, predominantly the male population. The proportion of female abusers ranged from nil in Togo to 10 per cent in Madagascar and 15 per cent in South Africa. Algeria reported for 1988 that cannabis had been increasingly abused while the abuse of cannabis resin had remained stable. For 1988, Burundi reported a large increase in cannabis abuse, mainly in the 25-35 age group. In Côte d'Ivoire, cannabis was increasingly abused in 1988, mainly in the 18-30 age group. For 1988, Ethiopia reported increasing abuse of cannabis in the 16-50 age group.

15. For 1988, Madagascar reported increasing abuse of cannabis, mainly by young unemployed people in urban areas. The drug was often taken in combination with heroin, alcohol or psychotropic substances. Six cannabis-related deaths were reported. For 1988, Togo reported increasing cannabis abuse, often in combination with alcohol. Such abuse was mainly observed among the young, and it was often associated with unemployment and delinquency. For 1988, Mozambique reported increasing cannabis abuse, mainly by individuals in the 15-45 age group. In 1988, cannabis was increasingly abused in South Africa, mainly in the 18-35 age group. Mauritius reported that in 1988 cannabis had been often abused in combination with heroin, alcohol or psychotropic substances. Such abuse showed a large decrease. Tunisia reported that cannabis abuse, which had occurred mainly in the middle and older age groups, had remained stable in 1988. For 1988, Zambia reported that cannabis abuse had been a problem, but the size of the problem was not assessed. In Zimbabwe, the level of cannabis abuse remained stable in 1988.

16. In 1987, cannabis was increasingly abused in Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Senegal and Zimbabwe. Guinea and Senegal reported a large increase in cannabis abuse. In Guinea, cannabis was often abused in combination with amphetamines. In Ghana, cannabis was often abused in combination with opiates or cocaine, mainly by lower income groups in urban areas. Crime and unemployment were often associated with such abuse. In Kenya, cannabis was often abused in combination with alcohol or benzodiazepines. In Morocco, cannabis was often abused in combination with alcohol or psychotropic substances.

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Psychotropic substances

17. In 1988, amphetamines were increasingly abused in Côte d'Ivoire. For 1987, Nigeria reported increasing abuse of amphetamines. In 1988, a small number of people abused amphetamines in Benin and South Africa. Kenya and Madagascar reported the abuse of khat.

18. For 1988, a number of countries reported abuse of benzodiazepines, tranquillizers, barbiturates or non-barbiturate sedative-hypnotics. Countries reporting the abuse of benzodiazepines and minor tranquillizers included: Benin, Botswana, Guinea, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria and South Africa. Those substances were often abused in combination with opiates, alcohol or cannabis. For 1988, Madagascar reported increasing abuse of benzodiazepines and meprobamate, often in combination with alcohol. Such abuse occurred mainly in the 25-45 age group. Two deaths related to such abuse were registered. For 1988, Mauritius reported increasing abuse of benzodiazepines, often in combination with heroin, alcohol or cannabis. Countries reporting the abuse of barbiturates or non-barbiturate sedative-hypnotics included: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Nigeria, South Africa and Tunisia. For 1988, Côte d'Ivoire reported increasing abuse of barbiturates in all age groups. In 1988, Mandrax (methaqualone + diphenhydramine) was increasingly abused in South Africa, often in combination with cannabis. For 1988, Burkina Faso and Tunisia reported the abuse of psychotropic substances, but did not specify the substances.

Volatile solvents

19. A number of countries (Burkina Faso, Guinea, Nigeria and South Africa) reported increasing abuse of volatile solvents.

The Americas

20. The abuse of cocaine, cannabis and multiple drugs, often involving alcohol and psychotropic substances, continued to be the growing pattern in most countries and territories in the region. Intravenous drug abuse, mainly involving cocaine, heroin or amphetamines, was the major vehicle for the increasing spread of HIV infection among persons abusing drugs and from them to the population at large.

Narcotic drugs

21. The abuse of heroin and other opiates by injection, which has been for a number of years a serious problem in Canada and the United States of America, escalated to some other countries in the region. In Canada, 1,107 persons were registered in 1988 for heroin abuse mainly by injection (in 1987, 1,786) and 3,012 persons for the abuse of other opiates (in 1987, 2,588). Heroin abuse was most prevalent in the 30-39 age group, approximately 42 per cent of those involved were women. For 1988, the United States reported increasing abuse of heroin and morphine by injection, mainly in the 30-39 age group, 30.2 per cent being women. In 1988, an estimated 500,000 persons abused heroin or morphine, often in combination with cocaine or alcohol. In 1988, 1,572 deaths related to heroin or morphine abuse were reported. For 1988, Mexico reported an estimated annual prevalence of 28,000 persons abusing heroin.

22. Argentina reported for 1988 a large increase in the abuse of synthetic narcotics, mainly buprenorphine and dextropropoxiphene. Those drugs were abused by eating or injection, often in combination with legal psychotropic substances. The abuse of synthetic narcotics was most prevalent in the middle

and higher income groups, 40 per cent being women. Other opiates, mainly dihydrocodeine, were abused, often in combination with alcohol or marijuana. Such abuse, which was observed mainly among the young unemployed in urban areas, remained stable in 1988.

23. Other countries reporting opiate abuse included: Bahamas, Ecuador, Suriname and Venezuela. In Ecuador, an estimated 18,700 persons abused synthetic narcotics in 1988. In Suriname, the trend in heroin abuse showed some decrease in 1987. Heroin was often abused in combination with cocaine.

24. Cocaine abuse escalated to become the major drug abuse problem in the region. Sniffing or injecting cocaine hydrochloride and smoking cocaine base or coca paste continued to increase in many countries. Coca paste, an intermediate product of cocaine extraction from coca-leaves, was abused (by smoking) mainly in the countries that produced it. Countries and territories reporting the abuse of coca paste or cocaine included: Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Cayman Islands, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Netherlands Antilles (NL), Panama, Peru, St. Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Island (UK), United States, Uruguay and Venezuela. The smoking of cocaine base or coca paste was a particularly dangerous pattern of abuse as it rapidly produced a high level of cocaine in the blood. Cocaine abuse resulted in a high euphoric effect of a short duration that encouraged repeated and compulsive drug use, which was often associated with serious behavioural and health disorders and violence. Coca-leaf chewing continued in certain population groups in the Andean countries, where it had been traditionally rooted.

25. For 1988, Argentina reported a large increase in cocaine abuse by injection or sniffing, mainly in the 15-40 age group, 40 per cent being women. The cocaine was often abused in combination with marijuana, psychotropic substances or alcohol. The abuse affected all social strata in urban areas, but predominantly the middle and upper income groups. Consumption of coca leaves, often in combination with alcohol, remained stable with approximately 200,000 persons chewing coca in the lower income groups (both urban and rural areas) of the north-eastern parts of the country. They belonged to the 18-70 age group, 10 per cent being women. For 1988, Bahamas reported the abuse of cocaine by smoking in all social strata, mainly in the 16-25 age group, 30 per cent being women. Cocaine was often abused in combination with cannabis or alcohol. The trend in such abuse showed some decreasing tendency. Six cocaine-related deaths were reported in 1988.

26. For 1988, Canada reported a large increase in cocaine abuse, mainly in the 30-39 age group. Approximately 15 per cent of those involved were women. There were 10,445 persons registered for cocaine abuse. The drug was more accessible than in the preceding year to all income groups, because of its greater availability and lower price. For 1988, Costa Rica reported increasing cocaine abuse by injection or sniffing, mainly in the 18-35 age group, 2 per cent being women. In Chile, an estimated 15,000 persons abused cocaine in 1988. Ecuador reported an estimated annual prevalence of 9,358 persons abusing cocaine and 18,717 abusing coca paste in 1988. Mexico reported an estimated annual prevalence of 88,000 persons abusing cocaine by sniffing in 1988. Such abuse showed an increasing tendency, mainly in the 26-34 age group. The Netherlands Antilles (NL) reported a large increase in the abuse (by smoking) of cocaine base in 1988. Cocaine was widely available and rather cheap on the illicit market. It was sometimes abused in combination with marijuana or alcohol. The abuse affected all social strata, but in particular unemployed youth.

27. For 1988, Panama reported a large increase in the abuse of cocaine hydrochloride (by inhalation). A large increase in coca paste smoking, often in combination with cannabis, was also reported. For 1988, Trinidad and Tobago reported increasing cocaine abuse by smoking. Cocaine was often abused in combination with cannabis or alcohol. The abuse affected all social strata, but mainly young urban residents. It was associated with violent crime, robberies, vagrancy, foreign exchange leakages, as well as with the spread of HIV infection (particularly among female addicted persons). St. Lucia reported that in 1988 a small number of persons had abused cocaine base by smoking. Cocaine was often abused in combination with cannabis. For 1988, the United States reported a large increase in adverse health consequences associated with cocaine abuse. Cocaine was predominantly abused by smoking, injection or sniffing, often in combination with alcohol. In 1988, an estimated 12,200,000 persons abused cocaine, 1,242,000 of them on a daily basis. Cocaine abuse was most prevalent in the 20-39 age group, 33.3 per cent being women. In 1988, 1,696 cocaine-related deaths were reported.

28. For 1988, Uruguay reported increasing cocaine abuse (by sniffing), often in combination with marijuana or amphetamines. The abuse was mainly observed in the 15-29 age group, 11.5 per cent being women. Venezuela reported a large increase in coca paste smoking, mainly in the 16-25 age group, 20 per cent being women. The abuse of coca paste commonly occurred in combination with alcohol, cocaine or marijuana. Cocaine hydrochloride was also abused, often in combination with alcohol, coca paste or marijuana.

29. Cannabis remained the most widely abused illicit drug, affecting almost all countries and territories in the region. Countries and territories reporting cannabis abuse problems included: Argentina, Bahamas, Belize, Cayman Islands, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Netherlands Antilles (NL), Panama, St. Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.

30. In Argentina, cannabis abuse, often in combination with cocaine, alcohol or psychotropic substances, remained in 1988 at approximately the same level as in the preceding year. Cannabis was abused in all social strata, mainly in the 15-25 age group, 40 per cent being women. For 1988, Bahamas reported increasing abuse of cannabis by teenagers in all social strata. Cannabis was often abused in combination with cocaine or alcohol. In 1988, two deaths related to cannabis abuse were reported. In Chile, an estimated 900,000 persons abused cannabis in 1988. For 1988, Costa Rica reported a large increase in cannabis abuse, mainly in urban and semi-urban areas. Approximately 3.5 per cent of the population in the 15-35 age group were cannabis users. Ecuador reported that an estimated 205,800 persons had abused cannabis in 1988. For 1988, Mexico reported increasing abuse of cannabis, often in combination with alcohol, mainly in the 15-25 age group, 1.7 per cent being women. An estimated 803,000 persons abused cannabis in 1988.

31. In Cayman Islands (UK) and the Netherlands Antilles (NL), the abuse of marijuana remained in 1988 at approximately the same level as in the previous year. For 1988, Panama reported increasing cannabis abuse, often in combination with alcohol or cocaine. In Saint Lucia, a small number of persons abused cannabis herb in 1988. Cannabis was often abused in combination with cocaine base. In Trinidad and Tobago, approximately 15 per cent of the recorded drug-dependent persons in 1988 abused cannabis, often in combination with cocaine or alcohol. For 1988, the United States reported increasing cannabis abuse, mainly in the 20-29 age group, 26.7 per cent being women. In 1988, an estimated 29,350,000 persons abused marijuana or cannabis resin, 7,268,200 of them on a daily basis. The marijuana was often abused in conjunction with

phencyclidine, alcohol, cocaine, heroin or morphine. In 1988, 146 deaths related to such abuse were reported. For 1988, Uruguay reported a large increase in the abuse of marijuana. It occurred mainly in the 15-24 age group, with 12.5 per cent being female. In Venezuela, marijuana was abused predominantly in the 14-18 age group, 20 per cent being women. Marijuana was often abused in combination with alcohol, coca paste or cocaine. The extent of abuse remained at approximately the same level as in the preceding year.

Psychotropic substances

32. For 1987, countries reporting the abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants included: Argentina, Bahamas, Chile, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, the United States and Uruguay. For 1987, Argentina reported that amphetamine-type substances had been more commonly abused by women (60 per cent) than men. Such abuse, which affected mainly the population in the middle and upper income groups of the urban areas, remained in 1988 at approximately the same level as in the preceding years. In Chile, an estimated 15,000 persons abused amphetamine-type substances in 1988. For 1988, Mexico reported an estimated annual prevalence of 207,000 persons abusing amphetamine-type substances, mainly in the 18-25 age group, 1 per cent being women. For 1988, the United States reported decreasing abuse of amphetamines (by eating or injection). In 1988, an estimated 8,060,000 persons abused amphetamines, 887,600 of them on a daily basis. In 1988, 206 amphetamine-related deaths were reported.

33. Countries reporting the abuse of benzodiazepines, minor tranquillizers, barbiturates or non-barbiturate sedative-hypnotics included: Argentina, Bahamas, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States. Argentina reported a large increase in the abuse of depressants, which were often abused in combination with marijuana or cocaine. Such abuse was mainly observed among persons aged 15 years or older, 40 per cent being women. Benzodiazepines were increasingly abused, often in combination with marijuana, cocaine or alcohol. Such abuse was prevalent in all social strata. For 1988, Chile reported an estimated annual prevalance of 600,000 persons abusing benzodiazepines. In Ecuador, an estimated 187,100 persons abused benzodiazepines in 1988. In the same year, an estimated 9,300 persons abused sedative-hypnotics on a daily basis. The abuse of those substances was most prevalent among persons in the 20-50 year age group.

34. For 1988, Mexico reported increasing abuse of benzodiazepines and other tranquillizers, mainly in the 18-34 age group, 2.4 per cent being women. Such abuse was estimated at an annual prevalence of 225,000 persons. The abuse of other depressants (sedative-hypnotics) was estimated at an annual prevalence of 30,000 persons. Trinidad and Tobago reported that in 1988 between 10 and 15 per cent of the drug abuse had involved benzodiazepines and minor tranquillizers. For 1988, the United States reported that an estimated 7,000,000 persons abused benzodiazepines or other minor tranquillizers (559,100 of them on a daily basis) and 5,230,000 persons abused barbiturate-type sedatives (228,000 of them on a daily basis). Those substances were often abused in conjunction with alcohol, heroin or morphine. Such abuse was most prevalent in the 20-39 age group, women being more involved than men. In 1988, 410 deaths related to the abuse of benzodiazepines or other tranquillizers and 192 deaths to the abuse of barbiturate-type sedatives were reported. The United States also reported that in 1988 an estimated 7,590,000 persons had abused analgesies, 249,800 of them on a daily basis.

35. For 1988, Canada reported that 530 persons had been registered for phencyclidine abuse and 3,999 persons for the abuse of other hallucinogens. Such abuse was most prevalent in the 20-24 age group. For 1988, Mexico reported an estimated annual prevalence of 78,000 persons abusing hallucinogens, 4,000 of them on a daily basis. For 1988, the United States reported increasing abuse of LSD and phencyclidine. In 1988, an estimated 3,180,000 persons abused hallucinogens, 104,700 of them on a daily basis. Such abuse was most prevalent in the 20-29 age group, with slightly less than a quarter of the abusers being women. LSD was predominantly taken by mouth while phencyclidine by sniffing. LSD was commonly taken in combination with alcohol while phencyclidine in combination with heroin, morphine, cocaine or alcohol. In 1988, 4 LSD-related deaths and 249 phencyclidine-related deaths were reported. For 1988, Bahamas reported hallucinogen abuse on a small scale.

Volatile solvents

36. Countries reporting the abuse of volatile solvents included: Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, the United States, Uruguay and Venezuela. Chile reported that an estimated 100,000 children had abused volatile solvents in 1988. El Salvador also reported that approximately 100,000 children had abused solvents in 1988. Mexico reported a large increase in the abuse of volatile solvents, which were often abused in combination with marijuana. Such abuse was estimated at an annual prevalence of 212,000 children and adolescents. For 1988, the United States reported that an estimated 3,170,000 persons had abused volatile solvents, 273,000 of them on a daily basis. In Venezuela, volatile solvents were increasingly abused equally by females and males, predominantly in the 11-14 age group.

Asia and the Far East

37. The drug abuse situation continued to deteriorate in the region, particularly with regard to heroin abuse, which had reached epidemic proportions in a number of countries.

Narcotic drugs

38. Heroin abuse remained a serious problem in Bangladesh, Hong Kong (UK), Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. For 1988, Bangladesh reported that heroin had been increasingly abused by smoking, mainly by individuals in the 20-40 age group. Unemployed young people and students were predominantly affected. In Hong Kong (UK), 33,338 persons were registered for heroin abuse in 1988 (in 1987, 34,259). Such abuse was most prevalent in the 31-40 age group, with 7 per cent of the abusers being women. The drug was predominantly injected and sometimes taken in combination with opium; 70 per cent of persons abusing heroin were employed; 80 per cent had records of conviction. In 1988, 28 heroin-related deaths were reported. Malaysia reported that 7,207 persons had been registered for heroin abuse in 1988, but it was estimated that 12,723 persons had used the drug every day. During the same year, 22,963 persons (in 1987, 21,951) received treatment for opiate addiction; 7,479 of them sought treatment for the first time. Heroin was consumed either by smoking, injection, sniffing or inhalation. It occurred predominantly in the 20-30 age group, with 1.8 per cent of those involved being women. When heroin supply was short, heroin-addicted persons turned to cannabis or psychotropic substances. Most of the heroin users were in the lower or middle income groups. Slightly more than a half of them were employed, mainly as unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

39. Myanmar reported a large increase in heroin abuse in 1988, with an estimated annual prevalence of 39,112 persons abusing heroin by injection and 31,290 daily heroin users. Heroin abuse was observed in all social strata, predominantly in the 20-29 age group in urban areas. Seven deaths due to heroin-overdose were reported in 1988. In 1988, Singapore reported increasing heroin abuse, mainly by individuals in the 25-29 age group, 6 per cent being women. In 1988, an estimated 9,000 persons (in 1987, 7,800 persons) abused heroin; 5,220 persons were registered for heroin abuse. The drug was taken mainly by smoking. Such abuse was most prevalent among school truants and unskilled labourers in the lower income groups. Two heroin-related deaths were reported in 1988. In Sri Lanka, heroin was increasingly abused in 1988. The drug was predominantly taken by inhalation, often in combination with cannabis, benzodiazepines, codeine, largactil, pethidine or barbiturates. It was estimated that approximately 30,000-35,000 persons abused heroin in 1988. Such abuse was most commonly observed in the 15-35 age group among school drop-outs and unemployed and unskilled employed persons in urban and semi-urban areas. Social problems, such as family breakdown, loss of employment, theft and prostitution, were often associated with heroin abuse.

40. In Thailand, heroin abuse, mainly in the 26-30 age group, increased in 1988; 55,051 heroin-addicted persons were registered in 1988 (in 1987, 50,484 persons). During the same year, 59,699 persons received treatment for opiate abuse; 12,220 of them sought treatment for the first time. Heroin was predominantly abused by injection, often in combination with cannabis, opium or tranquillizers. Such abuse had spread to the population of both urban and rural areas, chiefly in the 26-30 age group, 4.6 per cent of the abusers being women. In 1988, heroin was also abused in Indonesia, Japan and the Philippines, but the number of heroin-addicted persons was relatively low.

41. The smoking or eating of opium was traditional in certain parts of the region. In most cases, opium users were older than heroin users. In Myanmar, 33,317 opium-addicted persons were registered in 1988, but it was estimated that approximately 190,000 persons had been addicted and that 95,000 of them had been daily users. For 1988, Hong Kong (UK) reported that 2,807 persons (in 1987, 2,958) had been registered for the abuse of opium, 479 for abuse of other opiates (in 1987, 491) and 606 for abuse of synthetic narcotics (in 1987, 641). In Singapore, the opium abuse trend showed some decrease, with an estimated 450 persons abusing opium in the age group of 40 and over. In Thailand, 4,644 persons were registered for opium abuse in 1988 (in 1987, 5,192 persons). For 1988, some opium abuse was also reported from Malaysia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

42. It was estimated that in 1988 in Malaysia 1,618 persons had been daily users of opiates other than heroin and opium. For 1987, Bangladesh reported increasing abuse of morphine and pethidine. In 1988, opiates other than heroin and opium were abused on a small scale in Japan, the Philippines and Thailand. It was estimated that in the Philippines 23,140 persons had abused cough syrups in 1988.

43. For 1988, Hong Kong (UK) and Japan reported a small number of cases of cocaine abuse. The Philippines reported that in 1988 an estimated 190 persons had abused cocaine.

44. In 1988, cannabis was widely abused, either by smoking or eating, in many countries. Most cannabis users were young males. For 1988, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand reported increasing cannabis abuse, mainly among young people. Indonesia reported that in 1988 6,000 persons had been registered for cannabis abuse (by smoking or eating), most of them taking the drug in

combination with other substances. Malaysia reported for 1988 that an estimated 1,703 persons had abused cannabis on a daily basis. Such abuse was most prevalent in the 18-30 age group, with a small number of women involved. Alcohol was sometimes abused in combination with cannabis. Japan reported that in 1988 an estimated 16,000 persons had abused cannabis (herb or resin), mainly in the 20-24 age group, 14 per cent being women. Myanmar reported for 1988 that an estimated 3,960 persons had abused marijuana. Most of the users were manual workers or unemployed persons, predominantly in the 20-29 age group. The Philippines reported that in 1988 an estimated 10,140 persons had abused cannabis on a daily basis (by smoking or eating). Most of the cannabis users were the unemployed, school drop-cuts, students or employed persons in the low and middle income groups. In Singapore, cannabis abuse remained in 1988 at approximately the same level as in the preceding year. For 1988, Sri Lanka reported that cannabis abuse had spread throughout the country, mostly involving persons from low income groups. Hong Kong (UK) and Maldives reported for 1988 that cannabis had been abused on a small scale.

45. The percentages of female cannabis users in the region ranged from 1 per cent in Singapore to 20 per cent in the Philippines.

Psychotropic substances

46. In Indonesia, 1,230 persons were registered for the abuse of amphetamine-type substances in 1988. Japan reported that in 1988 the abuse by injection of amphetamine-type substances, mainly methamphetamine, had continued to be a country-wide problem, with an estimated 210,000 persons involved in such abuse, 15 per cent being women. The abuse was most commonly observed among persons in the 30-39 age group. The unemployed or workers employed in restaurants, building construction and factories were the most affected occupational groups. The Philippines reported a large increase in the abuse (by eating) of amphetamine-type substances in 1988. Such abuse was most prevalent in the 16-40 age group, 10 per cent being women. Hong Kong (UK) and Thailand also reported for 1988 some abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants.

47. Myanmar reported for 1988 that an estimated 36,680 persons had abused sedative-hypnotics and 1,688 had abused benzodiazepines. In 1988, 4,585 persons were registered for the abuse of sedative-hypnotics. Benzodiazepines were often abused in combination with alcohol. For 1988, Hong Kong (UK) reported that 704 persons had been registered for the abuse of sedative-hypnotics, mainly methaqualone. Benzodiazepines and other tranquillizers were abused by a relatively small number of persons. For 1988, Indonesia reported that 540 persons had been registered for the abuse of benzodiazepines and 780 persons for other depressants. The Philippines reported for 1988 that an estimated 6,950 persons had abused benzodiazepines and minor tranquillizers. Sedative- hypnotics were also abused, but the number of users of these substances was much lower. Malaysia and Thailand reported for 1988 some abuse of benzo- diazepines, tranquillizers and sedative-hypnotics, but the number of users of these substances was relatively low.

48. In Indonesia, 1,900 persons were registered for the abuse of hallucinogens in 1988. For 1988, a small number of cases of hallucinogen abuse was also reported from Japan, Hong Kong (UK), Malaysia and the Philippines.

Volatile solvents

49. For 1988, the abuse of volatile solvents was reported by Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. In Singapore, it was estimated that 900 persons abused solvents in 1988. In Thailand, 652 persons were registered for the abuse of volatile solvents.

Europe

50. Abuse by injection of heroin, cocaine and, to a lesser extent, amphetamine-type substances and depressants continued to present serious problems in the region contributing significantly to the spread of HIV infection. Cannabis abuse remained a widespread pattern. Multiple drug abuse, involving two or more substances in various combinations, was reported to have been often associated with serious psychological and health problems.

Narcotic drugs

51. Portugal reported a large increase in heroin abuse by injection in 1987. Most of the heroin users were young adults, 13 per cent being women. The heroin was commonly abused in combination with cannabis. For 1988, Turkey reported increasing heroin abuse (by injection or sniffing), often in combination with cannabis, benzodiazepines or cocaine. Such abuse was predominantly observed in the 31-35 age group, 0.9 per cent being women. Spain reported that in 1988 an estimated 57,300 persons had abused heroin by injection on a daily basis, often in combination with alcohol, cannabis or cocaine. Heroin abuse was most prevalent in the 20-24 age group, 19 per cent being women. There were 272 heroin-related deaths reported in 1988. For 1988, Greece reported increasing heroin abuse (by injection or inhalation), with an estimated over 700 persons being daily heroin users. The heroin was often abused in combination with cannabis, cocaine or opium. Three heroin-related deaths were reported in 1988.

52. For 1987, Finland reported that heroin abuse by injection had remained at approximately the same level as in the previous year. In France, the level of heroin abuse by injection slightly decreased in 1988 compared with the preceding year. Heroin abuse was most prevalent in the 22-27 age group, 25 per cent being women. The drug was often abused in combination with cannabis, alcohol or tranquillizers. In 1987, 228 deaths were caused by heroin overdose. Intravenous drug abuse was the major vehicle for the spread of HIV infection among persons abusing drugs. To cope with the problem, syringe sales had been liberalized since May 1987 and an evaluation of the measure was being conducted. For 1987, the Federal Republic of Germany reported that 3,232 persons had been registered for heroin abuse. Italy reported that in 1988 heroin abuse by injection had continued to increase, with an estimated 100,000-200,000 persons abusing the drug on a daily basis. In 1988, 45,000 persons received treatment for heroin addiction; 18,000 of them sought treatment for the first time. Heroin abuse was most prevalent in the 22-24 age group, 22 per cent being women. The abuse was observed mainly in urban areas of northern parts of the country, affecting predominantly the population of middle and lower income groups. There were 790 deaths caused by heroin overdose in 1988.

53. In Denmark, the abuse (by injection) of opiates, including heroin, was an important problem which remained in 1988 at approximately the same level as in the preceding year; 34 per cent of heroin users were women. In 1987, 140 opiate-related deaths were reported. In Monaco, heroin abuse (by injection), often in combination with cannabis or depressants, remained in 1987 at

approximately the same level as in the previous year. Such abuse was most prevalent in the 18-25 age group, 30 per cent being women. For 1988, Austria reported that the percentage of persons addicted to heroin among registered drug-addicted persons had remained stable. Of 18,389 registered drug-addicted persons in 1988, 16 per cent were heroin users. In 1988, 4,161 persons received treatment for opiate addiction; 1,823 of them sought treatment for the first time.

54. Belgium reported that approximately 5,000 persons had been registered for heroin abuse in 1988. For 1988, Norway reported increasing heroin abuse (by injection), often in combination with alcohol or benzodiazepines. Such abuse was predominantly observed in the 18-30 age group. In 1988, 63 deaths were caused by heroin overdose. In Yugoslavia, of 3,211 persons who received treatment in 1988 for addiction to narcotic drugs a small number was addicted to heroin. In the Netherlands, an estimated 15,000-20,000 persons abused heroin on a daily basis in 1988. They were mainly in low income groups, with low levels of education, in urban areas. Such abuse was most prevalent in the 25-35 age group, 25 per cent being women, and it was often observed in combination with methadone, cocaine, benzodiazepines or alcohol. Multiple drug abuse increasingly led to complicated medical and psychological problems. Syringe exchange programmes were implemented to prevent the spread of HIV infection through intravenous drug abuse.

55. In the USSR, of the total number of 14,366 new cases of drug addiction who received treatment for the first time in 1988, 0.03 per cent abused heroin. In the United Kingdom, 10,808 persons were registered in 1988 for heroin abuse, predominantly by smoking; 4,630 of them were new cases. Heroin abuse was most prevalent in the 21-35 age group, 30 per cent being women. The trend in such abuse remained stable in 1988. In Sweden, heroin abuse (by injection), often in combination with alcohol, benzodiazepines, cannabis, amphetamines or cocaine, remained in 1988 at the level of the preceding year. In San Marino, heroin abuse by injection or inhalation showed some decrease in 1988. It occurred mainly in the 21-28 age group, 37 per cent being women. Other countries reporting heroin abuse, usually on a small scale, included Cyprus and Iceland.

56. Countries reporting abuse of opiates other than heroin included: Austria, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Poland, Turkey, USSR, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia. In Hungary, dihydrocodeine was abused by eating or injection and codeine by eating, mainly in the 18-30 age group, 18-20 per cent being women. Dihydrocodeine was often abused in combination with glutethimide. Such abuse, which was observed mainly in urban and suburban areas, remained in 1988 at approximately the same level as in the previous year. For 1988, Hungary reported a large increase in the abuse, by eating, of a decoction of opium poppy capsules. Such abuse was mainly observed in urban and suburban areas. In Czechoslovakia, codeine abuse by injection, often in combination with alcohol, remained in 1988 at approximately the same level as in the previous year and occurred mainly in the 15-25 age group, 25 per cent being women. Solutions prepared from the preparations containing codeine and ephedrine were also abused. In 1988, 6,700 persons were registered for the abuse of drugs, including codeine; 65 drug-related deaths were reported. In Turkey, the level of codeine abuse, often in combination with cannabis or benzodiazepines, remained stable in 1988.

57. Poland reported that the abuse of opiates, mainly a decoction of poppy straw, sometimes in combination with benzodiazepines, had remained at approximately the same level in 1988 as in the previous year. The decoction of

poppy straw, which was concentrated and sometimes acetylated, was abused by injection or eating, mainly in the 20-24 age group, 25 per cent of abusers being women. Such abuse was most prevalent among unemployed urban dwellers who had previously shown difficulties in social adaptation. In 1988, 3,100 individuals received treatment for opiate abuse. In the German Democratic Republic, the level of pethidine abuse by injection remained stable in 1988. The abuse was equally distributed among men and women, mainly in the middle age group. The USSR reported that of 61,086 registered drug-addicted persons (cumulative total) in 1988, 14,366 had been new cases of addiction receiving treatment for the first time. Of the latter number, 54.3 per cent abused opium in the form of home-made preparations derived from a variety of poppies and poppy straw. The preparations were abused by injection or eating. Such abuse, which showed an increasing trend, was most prevalent in the 21-35 age group, approximately 13 per cent of abusers being women. Of 14,366 drug-addicted persons who received treatment for the first time in 1988, 0.93 per cent abused other opiates and 0.24 per cent synthetic narcotics.

58. In the United Kingdom, 3,175 persons were registered in 1988 for the abuse of synthetic narcotics, mainly methadone, and 676 for the abuse of opiates other than heroin and synthetic narcotics. In Denmark, 2,877 persons were treated in 1988 for opiate abuse; 900 of them sought treatment for the first time. In Yugoslavia, of 3,211 persons who received treatment in 1988 for addiction to narcotic drugs, 477 were new cases of addiction. For 1988, Cyprus and Liechtenstein reported a small number of cases of opiate abuse.

59. Cocaine had emerged as one of the major drugs of abuse in Europe. For 1988, Iceland reported increasing cocaine abuse (by sniffing), mainly by older people, 30 per cent being women. For 1988, Norway reported increasing cocaine abuse by sniffing, mainly in the 20-35 age group. Spain reported an increasing trend in cocaine abuse; in 1988, an estimated 39,900 persons abused cocaine, mainly by inhalation. The drug was often taken in combination with alcohol, heroin or other opiates. Portugal reported that school surveys conducted in 1988 at Lisbon had shown an increasing trend in cocaine abuse. For 1988, Sweden reported increasing cocaine abuse (by sniffing), often in combination with alcohol, amphetamines or heroin. Cocaine abuse was most prevalent in the 20-40 age group. In Austria, 6 per cent of known drug-addicted persons had abused cocaine in 1988, which showed some increase compared with previous years. Monaco reported for 1987 a large increase in cocaine abuse, mainly in the 25-35 age group, 40 per cent being women. For 1987, the Federal Republic of Germany reported that cocaine had been increasingly abused by injection or sniffing, mainly in the 21-25 age group, 20 per cent being women.

60. In the Netherlands, cocaine abuse remained in 1988 at approximately the same level as in the previous years. Cocaine was predominantly smoked or sniffed, often in combination with heroin. In Italy, 250 persons received treatment for the abuse of cocaine in 1988. In the United Kingdom, 786 persons were registered in 1988 for the abuse of cocaine by sniffing; 462 of them were new cases. The trend in such abuse was increasing. Belgium reported that cocaine abuse by injection had remained a significant problem in 1988. In France, of the total number of persons receiving treatment for drug addiction in 1988, 1.8 per cent were addicted to cocaine. Other countries reporting some cocaine abuse, usually on a small scale, included: Cyprus, Greece, Turkey, USSR and Yugoslavia.

61. Cannabis continued to be the most widely abused illicit drug in Europe. In most countries, cannabis abuse affected all social strata, but it was most

prevalent among young urban dwellers. It was often associated with the abuse of alcohol, benzodiazepines or other psychotropic substances. For 1988, Sweden reported increasing cannabis abuse, often in combination with alcohol, amphetamines or heroin. Cannabis abuse was most prevalent in the 16-30 age group. It was estimated that in Spain approximately 786,900 persons had abused cannabis on a daily basis in 1988. Such abuse was observed mainly in the 15-25 age group, 28 per cent being women. Belgium reported that in 1988 approximately 5 per cent of the population in the 15-20 age group had abused cannabis derivatives. For 1988, Portugal reported that school surveys at Lisbon had shown an increasing trend in cannabis abuse. For 1988, San Marino reported an increasing trend in cannabis abuse. Iceland reported that in 1988 cannabis had been increasingly abused, mainly in the 18-45 age group, 45 per cent being women. In the USSR, of 14,366 drug-addicted persons receiving treatment for the first time in 1988, 24.7 per cent abused cannabis. The Netherlands reported that in 1988 an estimated 12,500 persons had been daily cannabis users. For 1987, France reported that 16,014 persons had been registered for cannabis abuse.

62. Austria reported that in 1988 nearly two thirds of known drug-addicted persons had abused cannabis. In Hungary, cannabis abuse remained in 1988 at approximately the same level as in the previous year. It was observed mainly in the 18-25 age group, 5 per cent being women. In Denmark, cannabis abuse, which was most common among persons in the 16-35 age group, remained stable in 1988. Norway reported that in 1988 cannabis abuse, often in combination with alcohol or benzodiazepines, had been most prevalent in the 15-35 age group. The level of abuse remained in 1988 approximately the same as in the previous year. In Turkey, cannabis was often abused in combination with heroin, benzodiazepines or LSD, but the trend in such abuse remained stable in 1988. In Monaco cannabis was increasingly abused in 1987, often in combination with heroin, mainly in the 16-25 age group, 40 per cent being women. In Italy, 2,500 persons received treatment for cannabis abuse in 1988. Other countries reporting some abuse of cannabis included: Cyprus, Finland, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Malta, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia.

Psychotropic substances

63. Countries reporting increasing abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants included: Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Norway, Portugal and Sweden. For 1988, Norway reported increasing abuse of amphetamines by injection. Amphetamines were often abused in combination with alcohol, mainly by the 20-30 age group. For 1988, Sweden reported increasing abuse of amphetamines by injection or eating. Amphetamines were often abused in combination with alcohol, cannabis, cocaine or benzodiazepines; 25-35 per cent of amphetamine users were women. Iceland reported that in 1988 amphetamines had been increasingly abused by eating or injection, often in combination with alcohol or sedatives. Such abuse was observed mainly in the 20-40 age group, 20 per cent being women. In Denmark, amphetamines were often abused in combination with alcohol, mainly by the 17-25 age group. The level of such abuse remained stable in 1988. For 1987, the Federal Republic of Germany reported a large increase in amphetamine abuse. In Portugal, school surveys conducted in 1988 at Lisbon had shown increasing abuse of amphetamines. In Spain, an estimated 58,000 persons abused amphetamines in 1988. In Austria, 0.8 per cent of the registered drug-addicted persons in 1988 had abused amphetamine-type stimulants. Czechoslovakia reported that in 1988 ephedrine had been abused by injection among youth. The United Kingdom reported the abuse of amphetamine sulphate and methylamphetamine, which had been taken by eating, but the statistics on the extent of such abuse were not available. Other countries

reporting small-scale abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants included: Bulgaria, Cyprus and German Democratic Republic.

64. Cyprus reported that in 1988 benzodiazepines had been increasingly abused, mainly by the 40-60 age group, 60 per cent being women. Most of the users of benzodiazepines were unemployed and lived in urban areas. For 1988, the German Democratic Republic reported that 846 persons had been registered for the abuse of benzodiazepines and sedative hypnotics. The level of such abuse remained stable in 1988. The majority of abusers (60 per cent) were women aged 35 years and over. Spain reported that in 1988 an estimated 144,000 persons had abused on a daily basis benzodiazepines and minor tranquillizers and 29,000 persons had abused sedative-hypnotics. Sweden reported that in 1987 an estimated 80,000-160,000 persons had abused benzodiazepines and minor tranquillizers on a daily basis. The trend in the abuse of those substances remained stable in 1988. Benzodiazepines were often abused in combination with alcohol, amphetamines, cannabis or heroin. For 1987, Denmark reported that an estimated 8,000 persons had abused psychotropic substances; 60-65 per cent of those abusing benzodiazepines and tranquillizers were women, mainly in the 25-50 age group. The Netherlands reported that in 1988 psychotropic substances had been often abused in combination with other drugs.

65. Italy reported that 2,250 persons had received treatment for the abuse of psychotropic substances in 1988. Iceland reported that in 1988 sedatives had been abused by eating or injection, often in combination with alcohol; such abuse remained at approximately the same level as in the previous year. Portugal reported that school surveys conducted in 1988 at Lisbon had shown an increasing trend in the abuse of benzodiazepines and minor tranquillizers. In the USSR, in 1988 2,755 persons received treatment for the first time because of the abuse of benzodiazepines, tranquillizers or sedative-hypnotics. This number constituted 18.7 per cent of the total number of drug-addicted persons treated for the first time in that year. Turkey reported that in 1988 benzodiazepines had been often abused in combination with heroin or cannabis. The trend in such abuse remained stable in 1988.

66. In Hungary, the abuse of glutethimide, often in combination with dihydrocodeine, remained at approximately the same level in 1988 as in the previous year. Such abuse was most prevalent in the 18-30 age group, 25 per cent being women. Greece reported that in 1988 barbiturates had been abused by eating or injection, mainly by very young individuals. Such abuse, which was often observed in combination with heroin, remained at approximately the same level in 1988 as in the preceding year. Five overdose deaths were reported in 1988. Cyprus reported that in 1988 benzodiazepines had been abused, mainly by persons in the 35-60 age group, 60 per cent being female. Norway reported that the abuse of tranquillizers and other depressants had remained stable in 1988. Other countries reporting some abuse of benzodiazepines, tranquillizers or sedative-hypnotics included: Bulgaria, Malta, Poland and Yugoslavia.

67. For 1988, Austria reported that 2.9 per cent of the registered drug-addicted persons had abused hallucinogens. Such abuse remained at the same level as in the previous year. Spain reported that in 1988 an estimated 86,000 persons had abused hallucinogens on a daily basis. Other countries reporting some abuse of hallucinogens included: Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece and Iceland.

Volatile solvents

68. Czechoslovakia, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, USSR and Yugoslavia reported the abuse of volatile solvents, mainly by children and young adolescents. In Spain, the number of solvent users in 1988 was estimated at 29,000. For 1988, Turkey reported an increasing trend in the abuse of volatile solvents, mainly by individuals in the 15-20 age group.

Near and Middle East

69. Cannabis remained the most widely abused illicit drug. The continuing spread of heroin abuse was, however, the most striking feature of the drug abuse situation in certain countries. Abuse of benzodiazepines and sedative-hypnotics continued to spread in most countries. Opium addiction, which was well established in the region, showed a tendency to stablize or to decrease.

Narcotic drugs

70. For 1987, the Islamic Republic of Iran reported that heroin had been increasingly abused by injection, smoking or sniffing. An estimated 150,000 persons, predominantly young males, were daily heroin users. Opium abuse by smoking or eating remained relatively stable, mainly by the middle and older age groups. An estimated 500,000 were daily opium users in 1987. Approximately 30,000 persons were undergoing treatment for opiate abuse in 1987. For 1987, Jordan reported increasing heroin abuse by injection or sniffing, mainly by the 20-45 age group. For 1987, Pakistan reported a large increase in heroin abuse by smoking. An estimated 450,000 persons abused heroin, often in combination with methaqualone, diazepam, barbiturates or amphetamines. Heroin abuse had spread to both urban and rural areas, mainly by the 15-25 age group, with approximately 20 to 30 per cent being female. In 1987, an estimated 250,000 persons, both in urban and rural areas, abused opium (2 per cent were women). Persons abusing opium were older than those abusing heroin. Opium abuse showed a decreasing trend, as opium was increasingly replaced by heroin.

71. For 1988, Oman reported increasing heroin abuse by smoking or injection. Such abuse was often observed in combination with hashish, alcohol or volatile solvents. Most of the persons abusing heroin were in the lower and middle income groups in urban areas. United Arab Emirates reported that in 1988 a small number of persons had received treatment for opiate addiction. In Kuwait, the trend in heroin abuse remained stable in 1987. Heroin was abused by smoking, sniffing or injection, often in combination with benzodiazepines and sedative-hypnotics. For 1988, Egypt reported that cough syrups and common cold preparations containing codeine had been increasingly abused, often in combination with tranquillizers or sedatives. Those preparations were taken by eating, mainly by the population in the 30-55 age group. In 1987, 3,121 persons were treated for opiate addiction. For 1988, Iraq reported that opium abuse had remained on a limited scale. For 1988, Saudi Arabia reported a large decrease in heroin abuse and opium abuse. Heroin was predominantly abused by injection or sniffing and opium by eating, mainly by the 20-40 age group.

72. In Egypt, 118 persons were treated for cocaine abuse in 1987. For 1987, Jordan reported that cocaine abuse by sniffing had remained stable, mainly in the 20-45 age group.

73. In Egypt, 180 persons were treated for cannabis abuse in 1987. The Islamic Republic of Iran reported that cannabis abuse by smoking or eating had remained at approximately the same level in 1987 as in the preceding year and that it predominantly affected young people. For 1987, Pakistan reported that an estimated 650,000 persons had abused cannabis; 500,000 of them were daily users. Most of the cannabis users were in the low or middle socio-economic group and lived mainly in rural areas. Cannabis abuse was most prevalent in the 25-50 age group, 25 per cent being women. United Arab Emirates reported that in 1988 cannabis resin had been increasingly abused by smoking, mainly by the 20-45 age group, 5 per cent being women. Jordan reported that in 1987 cannabis had been abused by smoking, mainly by males in the 20-55 age group. The trend in such abuse showed some decrease. Oman reported that a small number of persons had abused cannabis in 1988. For 1988, Iraq reported that cannabis abuse had remained on a limited scale.

Psychotropic substances

74. Egypt reported a large increase in the abuse of amphetamines in 1988. Such abuse was mainly observed in the 25-35 age group, 9 per cent being women. Amphetamines were taken either by mouth or injection. Drivers in both urban and rural areas and unskilled workers and students in urban areas were mainly involved in such abuse. For 1988, Saudi Arabia reported a large decrease in the abuse of khat.

75. For 1988, Egypt reported a large increase in the abuse of tranquillizers by injection, mainly by individuals in the 25-50 age group, 12 per cent being women. Egypt also reported a large increase in the abuse of pharmaceutical preparations containing either stimulants, depressants or analgesies. Preparations containing analgesies were consumed predominantly by mouth, sometimes in combination with tranquillizers, while those containing stimulants or depressants were consumed either by mouth or injection. Oman reported that a small number of persons had abused minor tranquillizers and sedative hypnotics in 1988. For 1987, Jordan reported a decreasing trend in methaqualone abuse. A small number of persons abusing benzodiazepines was also reported. Pakistan reported that an estimated 56,000 persons had abused benzodiazepines and minor tranquillizers in 1987. In addition, an estimated 494,000 persons abused, by eating or injection, other psychotropic substances, mainly prescription drugs. Such abuse was generally observed in the 20-60 age group, 10 per cent being women. For 1988, Saudi Arabia reported a large decrease in the abuse by eating of barbiturates and methaqualone.

Volatile solvents

76. Oman reported that a small number of persons abused inhalants, mainly benzine or glue.

Oceania

77. The abuse by injection of opiates continued to pose a major drug abuse problem in Australia and New Zealand. The abuse of cocaine, psychotropic substances and volatile solvents posed important problems. Cannabis abuse remained a widespread pattern in most countries.

Narcotic drugs

78. In Australia, a sample survey conducted in 1988 showed that the estimated annual prevalence of heroin users was 0.4 per cent of the population aged 14 years and older. The number of opiate-addicted persons registered in

methadone maintenance programmes was 5,232 in June 1987. The abuse by injection of opiates, mainly heroin, occurred predominantly among individuals in the 18-30 age group in major urban areas, 30-40 per cent being women. The trend in such abuse remained relatively stable in 1988. In 1988, 295 opiate-related (mainly heroin) deaths were reported. For 1987, New Zealand reported some decreasing trend in the abuse of heroin by injection. Such abuse was most prevalent in the 15-19 age group. The prevalence of heroin abuse was estimated to be at the medium level, compared with that for opium (low), synthetic narcotics (high) and opiates other than heroin and opium (high). Synthetic narcotics (such as buprenorphine, pethidine, methadone, dextromoramide and dextropropoxyphene) and other opiates (such as codeine and home-made morphine) were increasingly abused by injection or eating, mainly by the 15-24 age group. In 1987, 16 deaths were reported due to the abuse of those substances. For 1987, French Polynesia (F) reported a small number of persons abusing opiates.

79. In Australia, a sample survey conducted in 1988 showed that the estimated annual prevalence of cocaine users was 0.8 per cent of the population aged 14 years and older. Cocaine was predominantly abused by sniffing, and the trend in such abuse remained relatively stable in 1988. Cocaine abuse was most prevalent in the 20-40 age group in the major urban areas, 30-40 per cent being women. For 1988, French Polynesia (F) reported that some 50 to 500 persons had abused cocaine. New Zealand reported that the level of cocaine abuse in 1987 was low compared with the levels of abuse of other drugs.

80. In Australia, cannabis smoking, often in combination with alcohol, continued to be a widespread pattern, mainly in the 15-30 age group, 30-40 per cent being females. The trend in such abuse remained relatively stable in 1988. A sample survey conducted in 1988 showed that the estimated annual prevalence of cannabis users was 12 per cent of the population aged 14 years and older. For 1988, Fiji reported increasing cannabis abuse, often in combination with alcohol, which occurred mainly in the 12-25 age group; 15 per cent of them were women. For 1988, French Polynesia (F) reported increasing cannabis abuse, mainly in the 12-30 age group, 25 per cent being women. An estimated 5,000-20,000 persons abused cannabis in 1988. New Caledonia (F) reported that in 1988 a small number of persons had undergone treatment for cannabis abuse. For 1987, New Zealand reported increasing abuse by smoking or eating of marijuana, cannabis resin and cannabis oil, mainly by the 10-19 age group.

Psychotropic substances

81. In Australia, a sample survey of the population aged 14 years and older conducted in 1988 showed that the estimated annual prevalence of the users of amphetamine-type stimulants was 2 per cent, benzodiazepines and minor tranquillizers 14 per cent, sedative-hypnotics 2 per cent, hallucinogens 1.6 per cent and inhalants 0.3 per cent. In 1988, the trend in amphetamine abuse by injection or eating increased while the trend in the abuse of benzodiazepines by eating remained relatively stable. Two deaths related to amphetamine abuse and six to benzodiazepine abuse were reported in 1988.

82. French Polynesia (F) reported an estimated 500-1,000 hallucinogen abusers in 1988; the trend in such abuse remained relatively stable. The hallucinogens were often abused in combination with alcohol or cannabis. New Zealand reported that the abuse (by eating) of amphetamine-type substances (anorexiants, anti-depressants and amphetamines) had remained relatively stable in 1987. The trend in the abuse by eating of benzodiazepines and minor tranquillizers increased in 1987. Six deaths related to the abuse of those substances were

reported in 1987. The abuse by eating or injection of other depressants (sedative-hypnotics) remained in 1987 at the level of the preceding year. Eight deaths related to the abuse of sedative-hypnotics were reported in 1987. The abuse of psychotropic substances was most prevalent in the 15-19 age group. The trends in the abuse of LSD, hallucinogenic mushrooms and Datura remained in 1987 relatively stable.

Volatile solvents

83. Australia, New Zealand and French Polynesia (F) reported the abuse of volatile solvents. In Australia, the trends in the abuse of aerosols and other volatile solvents remained at approximately the same level in 1988 as in the preceding year. In 1988, petrol sniffing was a problem among some aboriginal children and young adults in rural areas. Sniffing of other volatile solvents was more common among young teenagers in urban areas. Most of the abusers were in the 10-20 age group, 40-50 per cent of them being females. In 1987, nine deaths related to the abuse of volatile solvents were reported. In French Polynesia (F), the abuse of volatile solvents remained at approximately the same level in 1988 as in the preceding year. Most of the solvent users were in the 8-15 age group, 25 per cent being females. In 1988, the estimated annual prevalence was between 500 and 1,000 users. In New Zealand, the trend in solvent abuse showed some decrease in 1987; three deaths related to such abuse were reported in that year.